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Firm told to pay National Road 5 workers

NATIONAL

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Reporter: Khoury / Sophak Chakrya

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Representatives of the workers protest in Kampong Chhnang. Photo supplied

Sumitomo Mitsui Construction Company (SMCC) has been ordered to pay wages to 55 workers who are owed back pay by subcontractor D/CON Construction Co Ltd since April for work on National Road 5.

The order comes from the Kampong Chhnang provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training director Prum Sitha.

Sitha told The Post on Monday that the 55 workers who represented nearly 200 others filed a joint complaint in June seeking the department's intervention.

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He said he assigned a working group to study the matter and summon a company representative to solve the problem face to face with the workers' representatives. Both sides agreed to end the conflict with the company paying all wages on June 30.

"But when June 30 arrived, the company paid wages to 139 workers who didn't join in the labour department complaint, not the 55 workers who did," he said.

The 55 workers have since filed another complaint with the department requesting legal action be taken in case the company fails to pay their wages.

Sitha said a representative of SMCC said during negotiations that his company had paid money to D/CON Construction to pay the 55 workers.

"Our department requires SMCC to pay wages to all 55 workers because they are encountering difficulty in their livelihoods.

"Internal problems between SMCC and D/CON Construction are separate matters. We also warned that if D/CON Construction doesn't pay workers their wages this week, we will forward this case to the Ministry of Labour," he said.

SMCC representative Ban Vanny told The Post on Monday that not paying the 55 workers their wages was not his company's mistake. However, he conceded that it is also partly responsible because D/CON Construction is its subcontractor.

"Our company deeply regrets that this problem happened. We are now requesting that D/CON Construction send a list of workers' names, work dates and payslips to our company by this Thursday. Hopefully, our company is prepared to pay wages to the 55," he said.

A representative of D/CON Construction could not be reached for comment on Monday.

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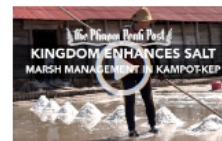
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